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CALIFORNIA COIN PHONES
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FREMONT, CA 94536

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DEC 30 1997

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO:	FROM:
Robert Spangler	Sharon Carpenter
COMPANY:	DATE:
FCC - Enforcement Division	December 16, 1997
FAX NUMBER:	TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER:
(202) 418-0710	2
PHONE NUMBER:	OFFICE NUMBER:
(202) 418-0700	(510) 796-5532
RE:	FAX NUMBER:
CC Docket No. 96-128	(510) 790-6321

☒ URGENT ☐ FOR REVIEW ☐ PLEASE COMMENT ☒ PLEASE REPLY ☐ PLEASE RECYCLE

NOTES/COMMENTS:

This is the second time I have written regarding the ability of IXCs to block 800 calls from payphones. With my last fax, I faxed a copy of a MCI letter which advised their customers that effective 10/7/97 they would begin charging \$.30 per call or they would block all calls from payphones for \$250 per month. MCI is assuring they make money using their blocking ability. Last week the CPUC advised their number one complaint was IXCs blocking 800 calls from payphones. I am faxing a copy of the CPUC advisory that was released on December 11th. This is in response to the overwhelming number of complaint calls the CPUC is currently receiving from the public.

I was told by the FCC that the purpose of blocking by IXCs was to avoid paying excessive compensation to payphone providers who are overcharging for local calls. I currently charge \$.20 for 15 minutes of local usage, however my payphone are being blocked by MCI and my payphones are being damaged as a result. To date I have not received any compensation from MCI for the \$.30 per call they are collecting. MCI is holding the \$.30 and earning interest on the money.

Currently over 50% of the time my payphones are being used by the public is for 800 traffic. I am receiving complaints from my customers and I am unable to resolve the problem. Please advise how this is going to be resolved. What is the announcement that let's the customer know who is blocking this call? Who pays for the damage caused by a frustrated customer to my telephonic equipment?

If I incorrectly directed this letter, please let me know who to contact to address these concerns. Thank you for your assistance.

DEC. 11. 1997 2:05PM

PUBLIC UTILITIES COM

NO. 0070 P. 3

Rate Caps Do Not Apply To Some Calls Made Without Coins

Rate caps do not apply to calls made using calling cards, debit cards, or travel cards by using a carrier other than the one selected by the pay phone service provider. If you make your call using a calling card, debit card, or travel card, the rates for that call may be lower or higher than using coins for local toll and within-California long distance calls.

Before You Call Using a Pay Phone: Pay phones must have signs telling you the cost for local coin calls, and what to do if you have a problem. Before you make a call at any pay phone, read the sign posted to find out how much the local coin call will cost.

Dialing Toll-Free Numbers From Pay Phones and 800 Number Blocking

Dialing toll-free numbers such as 800, 888, and 950 from pay phones is still free and does not require coins. However, the Federal Communications Commission has ruled that owners of toll-free numbers must pay a fee of 28.4 cents per call to pay phone service providers. If the owner of a toll-free number chooses to block calls made from pay phones, you won't be able to dial that toll-free number from a pay phone.

PROBLEMS ?

CALL THE PAY PHONE SERVICE PROVIDER if you have a problem with the phone, or your call isn't connected and you don't get your money back. Look on the sign posted on the pay phone for the toll-free number of the pay phone service provider to call to report these types of problems.

WRITE TO THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC) if you have a complaint about the cost for a local coin call, the cost of a directory assistance call, the blocking of a toll-free number made using a pay phone, or to complain about the rates for state-to-state long distance coin calls: Federal Communications Commission, Common Carrier Bureau, Consumer Complaints, Mail Stop 1800A2, Washington, D.C. 20554. Or call the FCC at 1-888-225-5322.

CALL PAY PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS ENFORCEMENT at 1-800-473-8220 to file a complaint about pay phone service, no sign in the pay phone stating the company or cost of a call, being charged more than the top rate cap for the time you are calling, not being able to use the long distance company you want to, or problem getting a refund. Or write to: Pay Phone Service Providers Enforcement, One Crow Canyon Court, Suite 105, San Ramon, CA 94583.

Pay Phone Service Providers Enforcement is a cooperative effort by the California Public Utilities Commission, Consumer Action, the California Pay Phone Association, the San Diego Pay Phone Association, Pay Phone Service Providers Group, Pacific Bell, and GTEC.

Pay Phone Service Providers Enforcement inspects pay phones statewide to make sure they are operating properly, and have signs listing the provider's name, the cost for calls, a phone number to obtain refunds, and other information to help you. Pay Phone Service Providers Enforcement also makes calls from pay phones to make sure callers are not being charged more than the rate caps.

A provider is given 10 days to correct any problem. If a problem is not corrected, the California Public Utilities Commission may suspend or revoke the provider's operating permit. □

DEC. 11, 1997 2:02PM

PUBLIC UTILITIES COM

NO. 0070 P. 2

CPUC CONSUMER ADVISORY

California Public Utilities Commission - 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

Contacts: Dianne Diensteln 415-703-2423

fax 703-2517

December 11, 1997

Adam Thaler 415-703-1157

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PAY PHONE COIN RATES

Using any pay phone is now more expensive than it was a few months ago because to comply with the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the Federal Communications Commission deregulated pay phone rates for local coin and directory assistance¹ calls. This means that pay phone providers can charge whatever rates they want to for these two types of calls. A local coin call doesn't have a time limit unless specifically stated on the sign that must be on every pay phone.

Rate Caps Are Still In Effect for LOCAL TOLL and LONG DISTANCE (within California) COIN Calls

Although the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) no longer can control the rates and charges for local coin calls and charges for directory assistance calls, the CPUC still enforces the regulations on rate caps for local toll and within-California long distance coin calls. This means that pay phone service providers may not charge whatever rates they want for these types of calls, they must keep their charges within the CPUC-set rate caps.

The CPUC does not have jurisdiction on rate caps for state-to-state long distance coin calls; rate caps for these calls are set by the Federal Communications Commission.

Rate Caps are the maximum amounts that a pay phone service provider may charge for a particular type of coin call. A pay phone service provider may charge below the rate cap, but not above. The CPUC set rate caps to protect consumers from excessive charges for local toll coin and within-California long distance coin calls.

Local toll calls are calls outside the 12-mile local calling area, but within one of the state's 11 local calling areas. Within-California long distance calls are calls between the state's 11 calling areas.

About Rate Caps:

The coin rate for the first three minutes of a local toll and within-California long distance call will be different than the rate for each additional minute. Pay phone service providers may not charge more than the rate caps set for the first three minutes, or the rate caps for each additional minute.

Rate caps vary based on mileage, the day of the week, and time of day. Costs for these coin calls may be less, but they cannot be more than the rate caps set by the California Public Utilities Commission. The Pay Phone Service Providers Enforcement Group monitors charges by pay phone service providers to make sure they comply with CPUC-set rate caps.

¹ IntraLATA Directory Assistance Calls Only; InterLATA Directory Assistance Calls still have rate caps. —